REVISED MARCH 25, 2005

2004-2005 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Type of School: **X** Elementary __ Middle __ High __ K-12

Name of Principal **MS. NANCY D. WATERS**

Official School Name **JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

School Mailing Address **2955 CLAREMONT AVENUE**

BERKELEY CALIFORNIA 94705-2449

County **ALAMEDA** School Code Number **01611436105316**

Telephone **(510) 644-4537** Fax **(510) 644-8643**

Website/URL **www.berkeley.k12.ca.us** E-mail **nancyd@berkeley.k12.ca.us**

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ **Date** _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent **MS. MICHELE LAWRENCE**

District Name **BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT** Telephone **(510) 644-6206**

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ **Date** _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President **MS. NANCY RIDDLE**

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ **Date** _____
(School Board President's Signature)

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2004-2005 school year.

3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1999 and has not received the 2003 or 2004 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award.*

5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district:
   - 11 Elementary schools
   - 3 Middle schools
   - 0 Junior high schools
   - 2 High schools
   - 0 Other
   - 16 TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: $9,510.00

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: $6,882.00

SCHOOL

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [x] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [ ] Suburban
   [ ] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

4. 6 Number of years the principal has been in her position at this school.

   _____ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
Pre K				**7**			
K	15	28	**43**	**8**			
1	19	23	**42**	**9**			
2	15	26	**41**	**10**			
3	17	26	**43**	**11**			
4	19	20	**39**	**12**			
5	23	14	**37**	**Other**			
6							
		TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →					**245**

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:

35	% White
39	% Black or African American
15	% Hispanic or Latino
11	% Asian/Pacific Islander
0	% American Indian/Alaskan Native
100	% Total

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 4 %

(This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.)

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	9
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	0
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	9
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	241
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.0373
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3.7

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 14 %
35 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 11

Specify languages: Arabic, Bosnian, Cantonese, Italian, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, Telugu, and Urdu

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 54 %

Total number students who qualify: 133

10. Students receiving special education services: 17 %
43 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

0	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
8	Deafness	0	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	7	Specific Learning Disability
9	Hearing Impairment	18	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Mental Retardation	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
1	Multiple Disabilities	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Emotional Disturbance		

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	12	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	1	8
Paraprofessionals	5	12
Support staff	2	3
Total number	21	23

12. Average school student-"classroom teacher" ratio: 20:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage.

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	97%	93%	94%
Daily teacher attendance	92%	96%	97%	98%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	20%	0%	7%	7%	14%

PART III – SUMMARY

John Muir School, the smallest of eleven elementary schools in the Berkeley Unified School District, is the "second home" to an ethnically rich and diverse population of 245 kindergarten through fifth grade students. Spanish, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Italian, Arabic, and Bosnian, are among the numerous languages spoken by our families. Enter the schoolyard on any Monday morning, and you will hear the voices of children singing about Lifeskills during the weekly assembly. Then, amble throughout our expansive campus, along the natural creek and redwood grove restored by the John Muir community, past edible gardens managed by students, and by the landmark 1916 Tudor building symbolic of long-term positive values and the dignity of education.

"The vision of John Muir School is to achieve academic excellence, promote personal growth, and celebrate the joy and beauty of nature, community, diversity, and learning." At John Muir, students are the core of our work; therefore, every decision is made with their needs in mind and every action we take is based on our commitment to their success. We continually ask ourselves both formally and informally**,** "How can we help our students achieve their personal best?" Answering this question sharpens our focus, directs our priorities, and helps us establish a clear vision. The strong partnership amongst staff, families, and community members ensures our shared commitment to maintaining the highest standards for our students.

Through the collaborative efforts of our teachers, students, and families, we have achieved outstanding academic results, and we continue to improve. In 2004, our Academic Performance Index (API) score was 819 out of a possible 1000. For the past five years, that score has increased annually jumping from 620 in 1999 for a total gain of more than 31%. Each year we have far exceeded the state of California's target for our growth and were selected to receive the Title I Academic Achievement Award. Today, we are now one of our district's highest performing schools, with one of the lowest achievement gaps between White and African American students.

Effective teaching and high expectations for *every* student are the keys to our scholastic achievement. Our exemplary staff includes mentor teachers, district leaders in literacy, math, and visual and performing arts, one National Board Certified teacher, as well as talented support staff. The dedicated teachers have carefully aligned curriculum to state standards, utilize a varied array of strategies and regularly assess each student's understanding to ensure mastery. One example of this is the exciting outdoor creek classroom that enhances our strong science and "eco-literacy" programs. Here, teachers encourage students to develop investigative queries, perform active research, draw their own conclusions, and present their findings.

In addition to academic excellence, students are acknowledged for demonstrating self-management skills that reflect responsible choices as well as respect for themselves and others. In 2002, John Muir received national recognition from the Character Education Partnership in Washington, D.C. for our outstanding Lifeskills Program using "singing and signing." All students and staff are exposed to sign language as we actively raise awareness and build bridges to the only Special Day Class for Deaf and Hard of Hearing elementary students in the Berkeley public schools. At our weekly assemblies, children learn sign language through song and are recognized for academic, personal, and social achievements.

Our parent community is an essential part of our school. Whether volunteering in the classroom or participating in school events, family involvement is crucial to creating a more effective learning environment. Parents and guardians offer input by way of PTA, School Site Council, and through personal communications with teachers and the principal. In addition, we have many community partnerships that have resulted in the significant enhancement of our educational program through grants and donations. Our relationships are based on mutual respect and the common goals of student safety, health, happiness, and academic success.

Together we are working so that each child leaves John Muir with a well-developed sense of self-worth, a strong academic foundation, an appreciation of nature, community, and diversity, and a love of learning. Our vision is becoming a reality.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Describe the meaning of the assessment results in reading and mathematics.

The Academic Performance Index (API) is California's academic multiple measurement system with scores ranging from 200-1000. An examination of assessment results for John Muir students shows outstanding progress in this system over the past five years. The goal is that schools reach 800 or higher and that each school meet an annual growth target, both for the general student population and for all numerically significant subgroups. John Muir's current API of 819 is an increase of more than 31% from the original API of 620 in 1999, with API's of 687 in 2000, 755 in 2001, 764 in 2002, and 814 in 2003.

In addition to California's accountability system, which measures achievement using the API, schools must also meet the requirements set by federal regulations for "No Child Left Behind." This requires schools to report how well students are achieving based on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). To meet AYP, elementary schools must meet three criteria. First, a certain percentage of students must score at or above proficient levels on the California Standards Test (CST). These goals must be met by all significant ethnic and socio-economic subgroups of students. Second, the schools must achieve an API of at least 560 or increase the API by one point. Third, at least 95% of the student body must take the required standardized tests. John Muir has met all criteria for AYP since the regulations were established.

The data tables that follow this narrative show students' performance in English Language Arts and Mathematics on the California Standards Test for years 2001-2004. These tests, based solely on our state standards, help us see to what degree students in grades two through five are mastering the subject matter content and skills set by our state and local Boards of Education. The California Department of Education website containing these test scores and other assessment information is www.cde.ca.gov.

Students' scores are sorted into five established measures of proficiency: advanced, proficient, basic, below basic, and far below basic. An analysis of student achievement in English Language Arts and Math indicates that the number of John Muir students in the far below basic category has decreased. In fact, last year, all students in grades two and five scored above this lowest category in English Language Arts as did all third grade students in Math. The efforts of teachers to design and implement intervention strategies and support systems for the lowest performing students have improved student learning.

John Muir students performed higher than the state averages in 2003-2004 with 45% at the proficient level or advanced in English Language Arts compared to the state average of 35%. In Math, 62% of our students scored at proficient or advanced compared to the state average of 41%. One noticeable anomaly in the fourth grade scores of this same year is the result of a technical error of mislabeling test booklets for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing students which caused their scores to be counted as far below basic. Our analysis of the data raised questions, and our research made us aware of the mistake. Our special education students actually perform much higher than their peers across the state.

Our overall school scores in 2003-2004 were fairly even with the scores from the previous year, but our API score still went up because fewer students performed in the below basic and far below basic categories. This has been an emphasis for our staff. Over the years, we discovered that our African American and socio-economically disadvantaged students scored far below their White peers so we targeted our efforts on their behalf. In the past two years, African American student scores increased by 40 points in 2002-2003 and 28 additional points in 2003-2004. Socio-economically disadvantaged student scores went up 37 points in 2002-2003 and 30 more points in 2003-2004.

Not only do we look at subgroups, we actually look at individual student performance in each of the subject specific strands. Teachers are given the scores from the previous year to study any trends in their students' performance. This information then directs their instruction so that areas of weakness can be strengthened. For example, we discovered looking over the past three years that an area of concern for all grade levels was writing. As a result, we organized professional development opportunities for our teachers with an emphasis on writing, planned school-wide writing assessments, and asked our literacy teacher leaders to share strategies for improving writing at staff meetings.

Continued improvement in test scores indicates that our approach to using and learning from the assessment results has supported excellence in education for all John Muir students. We are committed to ensuring that every student achieves academic excellence.

2. Show how the school uses assessment data to understand and improve academic performance.

Assessments provide the information needed to guide effective standards-based instruction. Like researchers who make tentative hypotheses and revise them as they gather evidence, John Muir teachers, through appropriate and timely assessments, build an ongoing picture of what students know in order to progress to the next level. Based on the California State Standards and Frameworks for each curricular area, the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) has developed a comprehensive student assessment program using multiple measures for data collection.

Staff members and parents analyze state Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) results to identify areas both at which we excel and at which we need to improve. District assessments are given three times throughout the year in math, reading, and writing, and the results are studied to guide professional development and direct our school plan revisions. Frequent school-wide and individual classroom assessments are utilized to measure student progress towards meeting standards and thus impact instruction to further student achievement. Throughout the school year, teachers continually summarize and reflect as they collaborate to find the delicate balance between assessment and instruction.

Disaggregated student assessment data continue to be studied to help us be sure that all sub-groups in our student population are making significant progress towards meeting standards. Each year, we use the state assessment data and district multiple measures to update our school's Single Plan for Student Achievement. The information helps us identify achievement gaps, set performance goals, and guide instructional decisions. Specific goals to ensure that every child is mastering standards are set in relation to academic needs. Then throughout the year, as data is collected, the goals are revisited and staff members analyze what is working and what is not and adjust for student success.

Our district uses a data analysis company, DataWorks, to provide us with site-specific detailed information of the STAR results as well as district developed assessment data. Results of assessments are shared at grade level and cross-grade level meetings so teachers can collaborate and improve the quality of their teaching. Teachers are comfortable sharing their ideas and strategies with others and appreciate the support of their colleagues. They view assessments as a way to evaluate and improve their own teaching methods and thus enhance student learning.

3. Describe how the school communicates student performance to families and the community.

At John Muir, we want every member of our school community to be well informed so we can support each other and work together to make learning effective. Teachers, parents, and community members help students achieve success mastering state standards by involving themselves in the learning process, for example, at family literacy, math, and science nights. Together we are building a home-school-community partnership. STAR test results for individual students are mailed to parents and discussed at teacher conferences. Students receive a copy of the district handbook containing the mission and goals for BUSD with information on assessments. Families and the community can access our School Accountability Report Card which shares our goals and accomplishments on the district website.

We share information about test results including the API and AYP Reports at our Back to School Night. The principal reviews data at School Site Council and PTA meetings. During conference week in November, parents and teachers review the standards-based report card and determine how to best help each child reach his or her potential. For students who are having difficulties, an Individual Learning Plan is developed with parent input. Students who are at high risk are referred to our Student Study Team. This group—made up of teachers, the principal, the school psychologist, and family member(s)—meets throughout the year to discuss strategies on how to help the student reach grade level standards and to recommend additional support programs. Students with special education needs have an Individualized Educational Plan developed with family, school, and district input.

Teachers also communicate through periodic progress reports, conferences, daily logs, classroom newsletters, telephone conferences, notes, and e-mails. Throughout the year, postcards are written by teachers reporting specific standards-based accomplishments. The principal includes a personal note of congratulations and mails the cards home. To be an effective school, and provide for student needs, we believe it is essential to have a strong communication network in place for all.

4. Describe how the school has shared and will continue to share it's successes with other schools.

John Muir's experienced principal, teachers, and staff continually offer support and guidance to other educators. Our principal shares successful practices at district administrative meetings and is part of a regional principal group that exchanges expertise and ideas. We are also in the process of establishing a partnership with Fruitvale Elementary in Oakland, California as part of our mentoring program in hopes of sharing strategies for common challenges as well as gaining new insights.

Weekly collaboration opportunities through scheduled minimum days provide access to others within our district. Our teachers act as district leaders in literacy and math and have made presentations at professional development workshops. Many serve on committees and as pilot teachers for textbook adoption. San Francisco State, U.C. Berkeley, CSU Hayward, St. Mary's College, Mills College, and other local universities continue to send their student teachers and student volunteers to us because of the outstanding mentoring our teachers provide. One of our teachers has established a partnership with Berkeley High School collaborating on project-based solar activities with our students.

Berkeley Unified offers families the opportunity to choose the school they attend and so provides scheduled school visitation sessions. This avails the community the opportunity to come and see our school in action. Monday morning assemblies are open to visitors and recently an editor of a local newspaper attended and published an article about our Lifeskills Program. There have been many positive articles in local and regional newspapers because of our academic and character education awards resulting in follow-up phone contacts and visits to our school over the past few years.

The district website provides valuable information for current families and for those looking at our programs. The John Muir PTA also maintains a website to share information about our school which includes the principal's newsletters. At John Muir, we take pride in our achievements and practices and we look forward to continually sharing what works for us while helping others so that they too can be successful in supporting students.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Describe the school's curriculum.

Across the grade levels at John Muir, we not only discuss the alignment of standards and integration of subject matter, but we also plan intervention strategies and extensions. A challenging **Mathematics** program for all students is evident in our classrooms as students practice skills, solve problems, apply their learning, develop a capacity for abstract thinking, and ask mathematical questions. Scott Foresman's text, California Mathematics, is the primary source for standards-based instruction though we seek to extend our students' understanding through the application of knowledge in a variety of circumstances. John Muir teachers are currently participating in the Noyce Foundation's Math Assessment Collaborative, the aim of which is to help students to reason mathematically.

Our school has a dedicated **Literacy** time to take full advantage of the Houghton Mifflin program. Teachers utilize an extensive set of assessment procedures to provide the basis for ongoing instruction that capitalizes on strengths and addresses deficiencies. **Reading** levels are tracked through running records and supported directly through the use of our library of leveled guided reading books. Assessment similarly guides the **Writing** curriculum. Teachers regularly rate writing samples according to grade level standards as a means of assessing our students' growth and informing our teaching decisions. Students know what is expected because it is clearly outlined by the teachers. Students learn to objectively evaluate their own work and that of their peers by comparing work to a set of known criteria. Writing is laced throughout the curriculum: in the "Math Problem of the Month," science journals, social studies reports, poems, and stories. Every week, fourth and fifth graders write topical essays from outline through revisions to final copy. January ushers in the school-wide Post Office where children focus on letter-writing skills to friends, reading buddies, teachers, the principal, and other staff. In spring, the school celebrates writing by publishing a sample from every student in the annual John Muir Journal.

The John Muir teaching staff, partly due to our beautifully natural and cultivated garden areas, as well as our participation in the California Nutrition Network and Edible Schoolyard Grants, emphasizes **Science** standards and brings lessons to life on our campus. The basic text, Discovery Works, is inquiry oriented and grounded in the California curriculum standards. Numerous teachers, as well as the principal, have participated in professional development programs in order to strengthen science instruction. Our gardening and cooking programs give hands-on learning opportunities for students to reinforce math and science standards. Students also participate in our annual Science Fair.

Our **Social Studies** program provides numerous opportunities for involving higher order thinking skills as students grasp concepts of history, geography, and citizenship. Second graders incorporate the use of timelines, while students in the fourth and fifth grade read actual history in Joy Hakim's, The History of US. Character Education and Service Learning are integral parts of the curriculum that brings to life the skills students need to participate in an inevitably changing diverse society.

John Muir offers a strong elementary **Music** program. Students are initially exposed to instrumental and vocal music through the use of Orff instruments with a credentialed music teacher who has received specialized training. Progression through the grades culminates in the choice of a specific woodwind or brass instrument with instruction twice a week. **Art** is offered weekly to third, fourth, and fifth grade students and on a rotating basis to the lower grades. The teachers often coordinate the art curriculum to support the classroom as in the study of leaf structure or creating a table-sized community.

John Muir has a minimum of two computers with access to the internet in each classroom. Families who do not have computers at home are allowed to borrow a computer along with relevant software during breaks and vacations. The **Technology** center is used regularly by grades one through five. Like our library media technician, our computer specialist is a credentialed classroom teacher, so she creates high quality supplemental projects coordinated directly with the teachers.

K-3 students train with a **Physical Education** specialist twice a week while upper grade students have P.E. with their classroom teachers. Programs emphasize the benefits of stretching, building strength and endurance, and developing strategies through teamwork. In addition, upper grade students are provided with "Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use Prevention" education and the "President's National Fitness Program." Our school's curriculum engages all students and is designed to support our vision.

2. Describe the school's reading curriculum and tell why this approach was chosen.

Our district has adopted A Legacy of Literacy because it utilizes a standards-based integrated approach to the teaching of the four language arts domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. John Muir teachers use research-based methodologies as they promote independent learning. We provide our students with a balanced literacy program based on best practices which includes sustained silent reading, shared reading, guided reading, spelling, vocabulary development, and writing. Most teachers have attended Guided Language Acquisition Design workshops where the focus is on integrating literacy into all subjects through a variety of interactive and highly motivating literature-based activities.

We spend our site funds on literacy instructional assistants for kindergarten because we value early intervention support. One of our two on-site literacy teacher leaders runs the "Reading Recovery Program" that targets struggling first graders. Throughout the year, she also runs small reading groups to offer additional support to second through fifth graders who need to hone their skills. Some of these students participate in the "Cross-Age Tutoring Program" where the goal is "each one teaches one." The double benefit of this program provides reinforcement of reading skills with lower grade tutees whereas upper grade tutors (often formerly struggling readers) get skills fine-tuned during their training.

Literacy teacher leaders attend off-site meetings once a month to learn about new methodologies that they bring back to share at staff meetings. Two collaboration meetings per month are dedicated to adaptation and integration of all information by grade level teams. In the classroom, teachers organize flexible groups for specialized guided reading instruction. An extensive guided reading leveled library is accessible to support skill and interest-based small group instruction.

Daily teacher read-alouds promote the love of reading as does having community members come read to students on our annual "Drop Everything and Read Day." The principal gives school-wide reading challenges throughout the year to stimulate self-selected reading. Our assessments show that students are progressing well and thus validate that our curriculum approach is raising academic performance.

3. Describe one other curriculum area and show how it relates to the school's mission.

The science and "eco-literacy" curriculum at John Muir School epitomizes the essence of our vision statement. These programs clearly help students not only achieve academic excellence, but aim to promote each child's personal growth and teach them the wonders of nature, community, diversity, and learning. The culminating educational experience for John Muir fifth grade students is the four day "Outdoor School" adventure in the Big Basin State Park that supports our science program while it deepens and celebrates the Lifeskills taught since kindergarten.

Our welcoming campus with redwood trees, a creek, and gardens presents the perfect outdoor classroom setting. Instructors in cooking and gardening funded by the California Nutrition Network Grant teach meaningful real-life lessons designed to support the science curriculum. For example, our garden teacher in coordination with the classroom teacher taught a lesson about the parts of a plant. Students then went out into the garden to harvest salad makings that included leaves, roots, and stems.

In the classroom, standards-based instruction includes earth, life, and physical sciences. Teachers utilize lesson materials from Foss kits and demonstration videos in addition to the text, Discovery Works. Most of our staff were trained through a project of "Kids for the Bay" to provide creek and pond lessons to help students develop their scientific process skills of observing, comparing, predicting, and analyzing.

John Muir is one of only two elementary schools selected by the Center for Eco-Literacy and the Chez Panisse Foundation to participate in a pilot program to "rethink school lunch." This program explores an innovative vision using a systems approach to connect science standards using food systems as a context for learning, while restoring the connection of farms to communities, meals to culture, and health to our children and environment.

Fourth and fifth grade students work under the direction of their teacher and in collaboration with their family to prepare science projects for our annual Science Fair. This non-competitive event showcases scientific investigations versus model demonstrations. Students are provided with this meaningful opportunity to share their knowledge of the scientific process. Our entire school community embraces the importance of science and "eco-literacy" and our students benefit from this united effort.

4. Describe the different instructional methods the school uses to improve student learning.

At John Muir, we work hard to provide a challenging, comprehensive, and balanced curriculum at each grade level using instructional methods that meet the needs of all students. Teachers have, and continue to receive, training in strategies that integrate standards across the curriculum thus strengthening the program as a whole. Teaching across the curriculum allows students to make connections and apply their knowledge and skills to real-life situations. Teachers collaboratively make instructional decisions based on assessment results and the ongoing analysis of student work.

When students enter as kindergartners, the teacher establishes a language arts and math assessment portfolio that follows the student through fifth grade. Students in the classroom who are working below grade level are identified and developmentally appropriate intervention strategies are planned. Students who are performing above grade level and are exceeding standards are also identified, and differentiated instructional plans are set up to meet their needs as well.

Methods from "Best Practices" are evident school-wide including guided reading, reciprocal teaching, and interactive writing. Cross-age tutoring and buddy reading also play an important role at John Muir. Teachers are sensitive to the various learning styles of students and provide cooperative learning opportunities and direct instruction in small and large group settings. Under the direction of our teacher leaders, the entire school has implemented a "Math Problem of the Month Program." The problems are related, but are differentiated for students at different grade and ability levels. Each classroom posts results of their problems on a centralized bulletin board thus bringing a school-wide importance and excitement to math problem solving.

Our teachers continue to be trained in the research-based program, Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) which uses a local classroom as a teaching laboratory and promotes real practice and reflection. In this integrated curriculum approach, teachers are taught to emphasize the use of visuals, chants, and graphic organizers to provide bridges to students who may miss information when it is only presented verbally. Trainings such as these help our teachers provide the best instructional methods to meet the needs of all students.

5. Describe the school's professional development program and its impact on student achievement.

An ongoing goal for John Muir staff members is increasing our effectiveness as a professional learning community. Because the focus of all staff development is to increase student achievement, professional development programs must align with our curriculum. Teachers and support staff, along with the principal, take advantage of extensive opportunities to expand their knowledge and share educational research and effective instructional practices. Teachers attend workshops including, GLAD, the Bay Area Writing Project, Noyce Foundation Math Seminars, Center for Eco-Literacy Collaborative as well as visual and performing arts programs. Coaching and mentor teachers support new teachers through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program during the first two years of teaching.

Primary teachers (K-3) have been trained in the "Best Practices" program through a partnership with St. Mary's College. Our two site literacy teacher leaders work directly with colleagues to enhance classroom expertise. Each month one staff meeting is dedicated to supporting literacy, including analysis of data. This creates an open forum where staff can collaborate and support one another by sharing ideas, materials, and the latest research on how students learn. Two grade level collaboration meetings a month allow opportunities to share differentiated strategies, review assessment data, plan lesson delivery, and reflect on teaching practices. Teacher collaboration time is essential to the success of students. Certificated and classified staff members at John Muir are eager to learn new approaches to support student learning.

The positive impact of this professional development is evident in the assessment data included in this application. For example, a comparison of fifth grade scores in English Language Arts on the California Standards Test shows that in 2001, only 29% of students performed at proficient or advanced. Last year, in 2004, 60% of fifth grade students performed at proficient or advanced. Every member of our staff contributes to the success of our students and ongoing professional development helps us all to do our personal best.

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS** **Grade: 2**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
SCHOOL SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	0	6	9	7
% At Below Basic	17	6	6	17
% At Basic	37	36	47	26
% At or above Proficient	46	53	39	50
% At Advanced	22	28	21	24
Number of students tested	41	36	34	42
Percent of total students tested	95	97	87	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Economically Disadvantaged				
% At Far Below Basic	0	6	22	5
% At Below Basic	20	0	0	26
% At Basic	36	47	56	42
% At or above Proficient	44	47	22	27
% At Advanced	24	12	11	11
Number of students tested	25	17	9	19
2. African American				
% At Far Below Basic	0	8	11	14
% At Below Basic	33	0	22	27
% At Basic	44	67	56	22
% At or above Proficient	23	25	11	36
% At Advanced	17	8	11	14
Number of students tested	18	12	9	22
3. White (not Hispanic)				
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	8	0
% At Below Basic	8	0	0	11
% At Basic	8	9	42	0
% At or above Proficient	84	91	50	89
% At Advanced	38	55	17	56
Number of students tested	13	11	12	9
STATE SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	13	13	15	15
% At Below Basic	22	19	22	24
% At Basic	30	32	31	29
% At or above Proficient	35	36	32	32
% At Advanced	12	12	9	10

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS** **Grade: 3**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
SCHOOL SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	3	10	3	13
% At Below Basic	11	15	22	33
% At Basic	46	26	14	36
% At or above Proficient	40	48	62	18
% At Advanced	11	15	16	3
Number of students tested	35	39	37	39
Percent of total students tested	100	98	97	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Economically Disadvantaged				
% At Far Below Basic	5	17	8	11
% At Below Basic	12	17	38	44
% At Basic	59	38	8	30
% At or above Proficient	24	28	46	15
% At Advanced	0	6	8	4
Number of students tested	17	18	13	27
2. African American				
% At Far Below Basic	6	20	0	18
% At Below Basic	12	27	37	36
% At Basic	65	33	26	41
% At or above Proficient	18	20	37	5
% At Advanced	0	7	0	0
Number of students tested	17	15	19	22
3. White (not Hispanic)				
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0	25
% At Below Basic	9	7	0	0
% At Basic	9	20	0	0
% At or above Proficient	81	73	100	75
% At Advanced	36	27	43	0
Number of students tested	11	15	7	4
STATE SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	17	16	16	16
% At Below Basic	22	21	23	24
% At Basic	31	30	28	29
% At or above Proficient	30	33	34	30
% At Advanced	9	10	11	9

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS** **Grade: 4**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
SCHOOL SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	23	0	5	0
% At Below Basic	14	0	24	20
% At Basic	26	32	37	28
% At or above Proficient	37	67	34	52
% At Advanced	23	41	10	16
Number of students tested	43	34	41	25
Percent of total students tested	98	97	89	86
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Economically Disadvantaged				
% At Far Below Basic	32	0	6	0
% At Below Basic	14	0	24	21
% At Basic	27	50	35	36
% At or above Proficient	27	50	36	43
% At Advanced	22	20	12	7
Number of students tested	22	10	17	14
2. African American				
% At Far Below Basic	38	0	5	0
% At Below Basic	13	0	20	56
% At Basic	31	37	55	22
% At or above Proficient	19	64	20	22
% At Advanced	19	32	5	0
Number of students tested	16	19	20	9
3. White (not Hispanic)				
% At Far Below Basic	7	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	14	0	25	0
% At Basic	7	12	37	29
% At or above Proficient	72	88	38	71
% At Advanced	36	50	13	43
Number of students tested	14	8	8	7
STATE SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	9	8	11	13
% At Below Basic	18	18	19	21
% At Basic	34	35	35	33
% At or above Proficient	39	39	36	33
% At Advanced	16	15	14	11

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS** **Grade:** **5**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
SCHOOL SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	0	3	3	6
% At Below Basic	9	15	13	15
% At Basic	31	50	33	50
% At or above Proficient	60	33	50	29
% At Advanced	31	8	20	12
Number of students tested	35	40	30	52
Percent of total students tested	100	100	88	91
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Economically Disadvantaged				
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	8	12
% At Below Basic	8	18	15	15
% At Basic	46	55	38	54
% At or above Proficient	46	27	38	19
% At Advanced	23	9	0	4
Number of students tested	13	22	13	26
2. African American				
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	10	11
% At Below Basic	5	25	20	26
% At Basic	32	70	50	48
% At or above Proficient	63	5	20	15
% Advanced	26	0	0	0
Number of students tested	19	20	10	27
3. White (not Hispanic)				
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	29	0	0	11
% At Basic	0	33	22	33
% At or above Proficient	71	66	77	55
% At Advanced	43	11	44	33
Number of students tested	7	9	9	9
STATE SCORES				
% At Far Below Basic	13	11	9	12
% At Below Basic	16	18	20	22
% At Basic	31	36	40	38
% At or above Proficient	40	36	31	28
% At Advanced	16	10	9	7

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **MATHEMATICS** **Grade: 2**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	7	3	6
% At Below Basic	0	8	8
% At Basic	15	17	22
% At or above Proficient	78	73	64
% At Advanced	41	42	31
Number of students tested	41	36	36
Percent of total students tested	95	97	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At Far Below Basic	8	0	10
% At Below Basic	0	12	10
% At Basic	16	18	30
% At or above Proficient	76	70	50
% At Advanced	36	29	10
Number of students tested	25	17	10
2. African American			
% At Far Below Basic	11	0	10
% At Below Basic	0	17	30
% At Basic	22	33	10
% At or above Proficient	66	50	50
% At Advanced	22	17	10
Number of students tested	18	12	10
3. White (not Hispanic)			
% At Far Below Basic	8	0	0
% At Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Basic	8	0	42
% At or above Proficient	85	100	58
% At Advanced	62	64	33
Number of students tested	13	11	12
STATE SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	5	5	8
% At Below Basic	20	20	24
% At Basic	25	23	25
% At or above Proficient	51	53	43
% At Advanced	23	24	16

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **MATHEMATICS** **Grade: 3**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	5
% At Below Basic	9	21	16
% At Basic	26	21	14
% At or above Proficient	64	59	65
% At Advanced	29	31	14
Number of students tested	35	39	37
Percent of total students tested	100	98	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	19	33	31
% At Basic	38	28	15
% At or above Proficient	44	39	54
% At Advanced	13	11	8
Number of students tested	17	18	13
2. African American			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	11
% At Below Basic	19	40	33
% At Basic	25	27	6
% At or above Proficient	56	33	50
% At Advanced	6	20	11
Number of students tested	17	15	18
3. White (not Hispanic)			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	0	7	0
% At Basic	27	13	14
% At or above Proficient	73	80	86
% At Advanced	64	40	29
Number of students tested	11	15	7
STATE SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	4	7	9
% At Below Basic	23	23	26
% At Basic	25	25	27
% At or above Proficient	48	46	38
% At Advanced	21	19	12

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **MATHEMATICS** **Grade: 4**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	2	0	2
% At Below Basic	16	6	21
% At Basic	33	18	37
% At or above Proficient	49	76	39
% At Advanced	30	47	9
Number of students tested	43	34	43
Percent of total students tested	98	97	93
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	18	0	33
% At Basic	41	40	22
% At or above Proficient	41	60	45
% At Advanced	18	40	17
Number of students tested	22	10	18
2. African American			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	5
% At Below Basic	31	10	29
% At Basic	38	21	38
% At or above Proficient	31	69	29
% At Advanced	19	32	5
Number of students tested	16	19	21
3. White (not Hispanic)			
% At Far Below Basic	7	0	0
% At Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Basic	21	0	63
% At or above Proficient	71	100	37
% At Advanced	50	63	25
Number of students tested	14	8	8
STATE SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	3	7	7
% At Below Basic	24	21	26
% At Basic	28	27	30
% At or above Proficient	45	45	37
% At Advanced	18	18	13

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: **MATHEMATICS** **Grade: 5**

Test: **CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST**

Publisher: **CTB McGRAW-HILL**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	3	3	0
% At Below Basic	17	28	19
% At Basic	23	30	28
% At or above Proficient	57	41	54
% At Advanced	17	3	16
Number of students tested	35	40	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	94
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	23	36	23
% At Basic	38	36	31
% At or above Proficient	38	27	46
% At Advanced	0	0	8
Number of students tested	13	22	13
2. African American			
% At Far Below Basic	5	0	0
% At Below Basic	16	45	33
% At Basic	26	40	25
% At or above Proficient	53	15	42
% At Advanced	11	0	9
Number of students tested	19	20	12
3. White (not Hispanic)			
% At Far Below Basic	0	0	0
% At Below Basic	29	0	11
% At Basic	0	22	22
% At or above Proficient	71	78	66
% At Advanced	29	22	22
Number of students tested	7	9	9
STATE SCORES			
% At Far Below Basic	10	13	9
% At Below Basic	25	26	31
% At Basic	27	26	30
% At or above Proficient	38	35	29
% At Advanced	12	10	7